

OCT 9 1917

DEEP SEA FISHING, ✓

SYNOPSIS OF FILM

1. Deep Sea Fishing.
2. Fishing Schooners at Wharves, Gloucester, Mass.
3. Getting Ready to Sail. Ice for Packing the Catch.
4. At the Fishing Grounds.
5. Squid Used for Bait. A Jig Used for Catching the Squid.
6. Overhauling and Baiting the Trawls.
7. Setting Out in the Dories to Lay the Trawls.
8. The Return to the Schooner with the Fish.
9. Hoisting the Dories to the Deck.
10. One of the Catch.
11. The Dogfish; a Species of Shark Which Destroys Fish.
12. Homeward Bound.
13. The Fleet at Sunrise. Nantucket Shoals Light Ship.
14. Nearing Port.
15. Unloading Fish, Boston, Mass.
16. Weighing Fish on the Wharf.
17. Fish Brokers and Pedlars.

THE FISHING INDUSTRY

SYNOPSIS OF FILM

ONE of the most important of New England industries is deep sea fishing. From earliest colonial days, the immense quantities of sea food obtained near the Newfoundland and New England shores developed a vigorous and fearless class of men inured to hardships and dangers and skilled in the handling of ships.

The design of the ships tended to greater and greater speed, as competition between the various ship owners became more keen, each seeking the high prices to be obtained before the lack of demand for fish should send the prices to an unprofitable level. Until late in the nineteenth century the industry was almost entirely in the hands of native born Americans, but in recent years the crews, except in the case of officers and owners of the vessels, have been foreigners or those of foreign parentage. To-day the Portuguese man most of the vessels sailing out of Provincetown and the southern New England ports. The Bravas, a seafaring people from an island near the African coast, form an increasing element in cities like New Bedford, long the home port of the adventurous whaler. Hardy Swedes and Norwegians, descendants of a race of fishermen and sailors, are now seen on the docks of the Gloucester schooners as they leave port in search of fish.

The life of these men is exhausting and dangerous and many of the vessels return with their flags at half mast, showing the loss of one or more of the crew, who have been swallowed up in the heavy fogs and never seen again, or have been the prey of the terrible storms which overwhelm their tiny dories before the ship can be regained. Even

the strongly built schooners are at times engulfed and opposite the name of many a ship and its crew that have left the old New England fishing towns is no date of their return.

As in other industries, there has been a gradual increase in the combination of capital, and great companies have taken the places of the oldtime skipper and owner. The increasing cost of better ships and gear has tended to throw the industry into the hands of stock companies which, through the contributions of many stockholders, have been able to build and equip costly ships and to handle the catch economically.

The greatest American fishing ground lies off the coast of New Foundland. Here in the summer gather Canadian, American, and European fishermen to capture the cod which feed in countless millions in the shallow waters where the sea floor has been built up by deposits from melting icebergs carried south from Greenland and Labrador.

During the winter season, much of the fishing is done in New England waters, and the film illustrates a trip to the hundred-fathom banks south of Nantucket in search of tilefish. This beautiful and delicious fish is a comparatively newcomer in the fish markets of the world. The first recorded catch of tilefish was made in 1879. It was in a section of the ocean where the Gulf Stream follows the border of the continental shelf. A hundred miles south of Nantucket the ocean bed drops rapidly from a depth of one hundred fathoms to one thousand fathoms, and it was on the precipitous sides of this submerged mountain that these fish were taken. In 1882, owing to the sudden shifting of the warm Gulf Stream to deeper waters, the tilefish, being a ground feeder, was unable to exist at such depths and was killed by the colder waters of the Atlantic. Thus occurred one of the greatest tragedies of sea life. An area

of the ocean's surface one hundred seventy miles in length and twenty-five miles in width was literally covered with dead and dying tilefish, and it has been estimated that over 1,400,000,000 of them perished. Ten years later the Gulf Stream regained its former position, and the increase in these fish since that time has been enormous.

It can be caught at all seasons, and is now one of the principal fish in New England waters. The fish is large, beautifully colored, of excellent food quality, occurs in great abundance, is easily caught, and may be marketed in excellent condition, because the fishing grounds are so near land.

These pictures were taken on a winter trip from Gloucester to the Nantucket banks, and show the methods of fishing and the dangers to which the men are exposed.

The preparation of a fishing vessel for a winter trip to Nova Scotia, Labrador, the Grand Banks, or to any of the deep sea fishing grounds, consists in placing on board from thirty to sixty tons of ice, the removing of summer canvas, the binding of new sails, and the overhauling and adjusting of heavy gear to withstand the furious gales which so frequently visit our northeastern coast.

It is a difficult matter to procure fishermen enough to man a vessel in the winter months, especially after a prosperous summer season, when the men have shared in large catches of mackerel and cod. Moreover, the old type of fishermen that one sees in pictures, with flowing whiskers and hands knotted with rheumatism, is a memory of the past. The fishermen of to-day are vigorous young men whose forefathers for generations have followed the seas.

Upon leaving the home port, everything aboard the vessel is made snug for possible rough weather, and the baiting of the trawls begins immediately after the weighing of the anchor. The bait used depends upon the kind of fish that are sought. The picture before us illustrates the catching

of the tilefish already mentioned, and the fishing grounds are south by east of Nantucket Lightship.

Upon the arrival at the fishing grounds, the dories are hoisted over the side and are released in a line extending over a stretch of two or three miles in a direction depending entirely upon the wind. When the dories are dropped from the vessel they are towed until they are sufficiently separated to prevent the snarling of the trawls, and immediately upon the release of the last dory the vessel is put about and sails from one end of the line to the other, the skipper being at the wheel and the steward below preparing the next meal.

At this time it is the skipper's duty to keep such careful watch upon the weather as to foresee the arising of a squall and to prevent the loss of his men. As soon as a dory is released, the men drop the trawls, each of which is about three hundred fathoms in length and contains about five hundred hooks, each baited with a piece of dogfish. Having released the trawls the men at the stern of each dory attach the lines to the anchors, while the men in the bow continue rowing in a straight line away from the trawls. The anchor is then cast overboard, the upper end of the anchor line being attached to a buoy, which in turn is attached to the dory.

After an interval of perhaps twenty minutes or half an hour the skipper on the vessel sounds the foghorn as a signal to haul the trawls. As the men in the bow of the dory haul in the anchor lines and later the trawls, the men in the stern coil the lines in their respective tubs and rebait the hooks. Immediately after the trawls are hauled, the dories return to the vessel, which lies on the leeward side. Sometimes the men row and sometimes they sail, according to the distance from the schooner, and the condition of the weather.

As the dories run alongside the vessel, the tubs of gear or trawl lines are handed aboard first for safety's sake, then the fish are pitched into pens arranged just aft the dory stations, and the men clamber aboard, hoisting their dories by handlines.

When all the dories have returned, the men clean the fish, wash them, and pass them below, where they are packed in ice for the return voyage. While it is often possible to complete the fishing necessary for a trip in two or three days, the scarcity of fish or a spell of bad weather might render it necessary to lie on the grounds for two or three weeks. In summertime, cod and mackerel are packed in ice and salt, but in the winter season fresh fishing predominates, and the trips must of necessity be short. Very little fishing is done to-day by handlines, but seining and gill-netting are favorite methods employed by those who do not trawl.

Immediately upon the securing of a favorable catch, the hatches are battened down, extra sail is hoisted, and the vessel steers for the home port and market, making all possible speed. The marketing of fish consists chiefly in securing the largest possible bid from fish brokers. As the market constantly fluctuates, the fishermen as well as the skipper are vitally interested in the prices, for all the expenses and profits of the trip are shared by them.

QUESTIONS ON FILM

1. What impressed you most in the whole film?
2. Did you learn anything you did not know about the ocean?
3. What three things did you see done in preparation for this fishing trip? Describe the vessels used.
4. What is a "jig"? What are squid? For what and how used?

5. Describe the dangers which the deep sea fisherman endures.
6. Tell in detail what you saw the men doing in the picture called "Baiting the Trawls."
7. Why do the men set off in dories from the schooner? Tell two ways in which you saw the dories return to the boat.
8. How is the catch loaded into the schooner? Describe the fish caught.
9. Why is the picture the "Nantucket Shoals Lightship" of interest? What is the purpose of a lightship?
10. From the picture "Nearing Port" in what manner should you think the schooner was approaching dock? Why?
11. Why are there so many small carts on the wharf in the last scenes of the film?

GENERAL QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How differently is the fishing industry carried on to-day from fifty years ago?
2. Characteristics of men engaged in New England Fisheries.
3. Locate the best fishing grounds in New England waters.
4. Name kinds of fish of commercial value caught in New England waters.
5. How are they marketed?
6. Bring in a report of the value of New England sea fisheries.
7. Describe methods of curing codfish.
8. Have fish any value aside from that of food?

SUGGESTED TOPICS

1. Discussion of fishing on South Atlantic and Pacific coasts.
2. Fish of Mississippi and tributary rivers.
3. Discussion of sardines, domestic and imported.
4. Interesting facts concerning government lighting of coast and shoals and the care of lighthouses and keepers. Life saving stations, drills, etc.

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